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221 But the Mundurucu are cultivators and hunters. Their crude husbandry cannot provide them with plentiful resources. And hunting, even on those plains that teem with game, could never supply with regularity a large population center. As game becomes less abundant, the hunters are forced to wander ever farther to find it.

The need and taste for hunting, instead of bringing men together, tends on the contrary to isolate them increasingly, for isolation is the only means of avoiding competition in this sport upon which their very existence actually depends.

No other motive is to be sought for the dispersal of Mundurucu families during the summer months. As already mentioned above, I came upon some of those families in the course of my travels, living in huts in the midst of the woods or on the banks of the Cadereri.

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619 In spite of everything, however, the tribe remains strongly united although divided into twenty villages.

It is true that the villages own allegiance to no central government, either civil or religious; but the moral bonds which hold together all the villages and all the individual members of the tribe are so strong that they have withstood all divisive influences through the long history of the tribe. [113]

585 Among the Mundurucu, marriage consists of a simple agreement between the marriage partners and their families, and is not invested with any religious character or formulas.

● 584 Sometimes a Mundurucu is betrothed to a young girl through an agreement with her family, and thenceforth treats her as his future wife, supplying her with game and other means of subsistence until she reaches puberty and the marriage is consummated.

From the moment of the agreement, the betrothed girl is respected by all as such, and no one dares dispute her with the man destined to become her husband.

[585] The marriage, once celebrated, constitutes a strong bond between the spouses. Polygamy is not practiced in this tribe, and scenes of jealousy are not infrequent.

582 The village women, though overburdened with work, are treated with a certain regard; they are not even permitted to enter the ekca or warriors' quarters.

726 though Martius reports that women participated in the battle to the extent
462 of recovering arrows shot by the enemy and delivering them to their own
warriors. He even asserts that the women "cleverly catch the arrows of
the enemy in flight" (Spix and Martius, 1823-31, 3: 1,313). The usual
method of attack was to assault the enemy village at daybreak and to
fire the huts by means of incendiary arrows. During the fight, the war
leader stood behind his warriors directing the attack. Assistants signaled
his orders on their trumpets. Women and children of the enemy were
727 taken prisoner; the women were later married by *Mundurucu* men, and
the children were adopted. But enemy warriors were killed and their
heads taken as trophies.

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[736] A *Mundurucu* warrior who had fought bravely but because of a wound
had failed to obtain a head, received in compensation a cotton belt from
which hung teeth removed from enemy heads. Such a belt might also
be given to the widow of a warrior killed in battle (pl. 23, right), and
her possession of it entitled her to be supported by the community. When
a warrior had been wounded, his name was not spoken for a year; during
this time he was considered to be dead. At the end of the year, a feast
was given to reinstate him in the community.

Trophy heads were dried and colored with urucú or genipa; the brain
cavity was filled with cotton and a carrying cord was laced through the
lips (pl. 23, left). *Mundurucu* trophy heads were not shrunken. (Koser-
itz (1885) and Barbosa Rodrigues (1882 a) were both in error on this
point.)

266 Strömer believes that the *Mundurucu* were cannibalistic, basing his
belief on a passage in native text which seems to imply that some part
of the trophy head was eaten. Kruse (1934) denies that the *Mundurucu*
were in any way cannibalistic; Nimuendajú (personal communication)
doubts the credibility of Strömer's informants on this subject.

LIFE CYCLE

846 **Birth and naming.**—According to Martius, the father keeps to his
553 hammock for several weeks after the birth of a child and there receives
the visits and solicitude of his neighbors. Immediately after its birth,
the child is given a totemic name. Other names are added as the child
grows older. If a man performs a heroic deed in hunting or warfare,
his heroism will be commemorated by an additional name. When children
852 reach their 8th year, their tattooing begins, and a boy takes up residence
in the men's house.

881 **Puberty and marriage.**—Martius (1867) says that a girl at her first
menstruation is required to undergo a long period of fasting "while ex-
posed to the smoke in the gable of the hut."

• 584 A girl may be betrothed while still quite young to a mature warrior.
Though she remains with her parents and the marriage is not consummated

until she reaches puberty, the prospective husband assumes the responsibility of providing food for her and her parents. A younger man may obtain a wife by giving several years' bride service in the household of the girl's parents. 584 ●

Death and burial.—An "executioner"¹ was pointed out to Martius, whose duty it was to despatch the fatally ill and the senile. Attribution of this custom to the *Mundurucu* is said to be widespread among neighboring tribes. 888 734

When a death occurs, the maternal² relatives of the deceased cut their hair, blacken their faces, and conduct a prolonged wailing for the dead. The corpse, wrapped in a hammock, is placed upright with flexed knees in a cylindrical grave under the floor of the dwelling. Grave goods consist of ornaments and other small objects. Skeletons of men of high status are exhumed and burned after the flesh has decayed; the ashes are buried in jars. 764

When a warrior is killed on a distant battlefield, his head is taken back to the village and put on display with his ornaments, trumpet, and weapons. After a feast in honor of the deceased, the head is suspended from the neck of his mother, widow, or sister, and his fellow warriors pledge to avenge his death. During this ceremony the shaman is isolated in a special hut where he blows the sacred trumpet (*kaduké*). The ceremony is repeated at yearly intervals, terminating with the fourth performance, when the head is finally buried in the house of the deceased. 766

RELIGIOUS CEREMONIES

At the beginning of winter, the *Mundurucu* perform a ceremony which on alternate years invokes success in hunting and in fishing. The shaman, isolated in a special hut, propitiates the guardian spirits of game animals and fish. A ventriloquistic dialogue in which the voices of the animals are heard proceeding from the hut informs the people of the shaman's success in obtaining the favor of the spirits. Offerings are made to the skulls of animals and fish. The ceremony is directed by a feast leader who is both a prominent warrior and a good singer. Tocantins (1877) reports a similar annual ceremony to propitiate the spirits of maize and manioc. 796 756

Farabee (1917 a) describes a feast held at the first full moon in May to celebrate the first hunt following the birth of the April litters of peccaries. After a feast in which young peccaries are eaten, there is a dance in which the performers imitate a herd of peccaries. Children run among the dancers like young peccaries while the older people imitate the sound of peccaries feeding; a dancer representing an old boar protecting the herd wrestles with another dancer who plays the part of a jaguar. The boar succeeds in holding off the jaguar while the herd of peccaries escapes. 796 535 224

1 [Martius (source #3) says this was done by the children - Analyst]
2 [Martius says female rather than maternal - Analyst]

000 the village. The children were reared in a stable group
855 that provided a large degree of emotional and economic security. The Mundurucu were and are devoted parents, and there was great affection between parents and children. However, the sudden death of both parents would have caused no great change in the social and economic life of the child.

Marriage

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Marriages were sometimes arranged for the children by the parents when the children were still very young. Most of these arrangements were made between brothers and sisters for their children and were within the pattern of inter-society, cross-cousin marriage. The parents of either the boy or girl could take the initiative. In many cases, a young man who had developed a desire for a girl either asked her father and mother for her directly or used the intermediary of his own parents or older relatives. There was no gift exchange or bride price or service involved. If

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the match was found suitable by both families, the young man merely moved to the girl's village and took up residence in the men's house there. If he married a girl of his own village, as was often the case, he merely changed his household affiliation. He had socially recognized sexual rights to her and became a part of the economy of her household.

[836]

In most cases, the man and woman had entered into sexual relations with each other before the marriage. If the young man had lived in the same village as his wife, the social recognition of the bond caused little change in the life of the couple or their families. The man began to bring

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614 expected to show warmth, support, and hospitality to each other; they are "brothers" and are expected to act accordingly. These obligations are discharged when a Mundurucú is called upon to do so. He seldom meets more than a few of his clan fellows in the course of everyday life, however, and the opportunity for the exercise of expected behavior toward any large number of fellow clansmen rarely arises. This follows from the results of matrilocality and also from the contemporary rarity of gatherings involving people of several villages. The latter factor is of [619] some importance, for multivillage participation in warfare and ceremony was the distinguishing feature of Mundurucú tribal integration in times past.

611 The patrilineal principle of descent has contemporary
622 significance beyond the inheritance of clan membership. Chieftaincy is ideally transmitted in the male line; the eldest son of the chief is considered the appropriate heir, but the office may also be passed to a brother or a younger son. In order to accommodate patrilineal inheritance to the continuity of village leadership, the sons of village chiefs are generally exempt from the matrilocal rule. Also, 611 shamanistic power is believed to be inherent in certain
756 people from birth and is inherited only through the father. Whole family lines are recognized as shamans, whether or not they actually practice the art.

428 Shamanism and chieftaincy are the only important in-
768 heritable offices. All portable personal property is destroyed on the death of the owner. Houses, which are abandoned every ten years, are not inherited, and there is no private or group property in land.

MARRIAGE

- 584 Entry into a marital compact is an extremely simple affair among the Mundurucú. A young man in search of a mate

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often wanders from village to village, hanging his hammock in the men's houses and acquainting himself with available girls. If one meets his fancy, he generally enters into a casual liaison with her and then asks her father and mother for permission to marry. If they consider him to be a serious person and a good worker, permission is usually granted. The young man does not always represent himself but frequently returns home to ask his father to speak in his behalf. Marriages are occasionally contracted for the children by the parents; this practice is less common than it was in the past, as the decreased importance of the extended family has made marriage increasingly an individual affair rather than a bond between kin groups. 584

No special observances of either a ceremonial or an economic nature precede the marriage. If the young man was a resident of another village, he comes to the bride's village bearing his hammock, arms and personal possessions and installs himself in the men's house. If he is from the same village as the bride, which is less frequently the case, he makes no change at all in his living arrangements. The groom merely brings fish and game to his bride, and not to the house of his mother. The provision of the wife with food is the central symbolic act in marriage. Both mythology and real life abound with cases in which the young man who is determined to leave his wife, openly and deliberately refuses to give her his day's kill; this effectively constitutes divorce. 585

Mundurucú marriages become consolidated by time and children. Couples who have been married several years commonly show great devotion to each other. But the union tends to be brittle in its early period. The membership of the husband and wife in the men's house and the dwelling house, respectively, and the patterns of collectivism in consumption give the couple a degree of economic in- 586

THE LOCAL GROUP

brush. Boys of about twelve and more, who live in the⁸⁵⁷ men's house, have very loose ties with their households.⁸⁶⁸ Only a house-by-house census could accurately determine^[591] where each of these boys belongs, for they are bound only^[593] by ties of affection to the houses of their mothers.

Central to the relative independence of the boys as com-⁵⁶² pared to the girls is the fact that male labor is not oriented⁴⁶² about any household economy, and the boys take little⁸⁶⁷ part in adult male labor until they reach the age of fourteen or fifteen. A few years after this time, most marry and shift their household affiliation. Unlike the girl, the boy is not reared within the social unit in which he will take permanent membership, and strong ties and obligations to the extended family are not enforced upon him. And since^[596] the extended family has its core in a group of related and coöperating females, it is not expected that a boy will help in their work.

The nature of male work combines with the social structural factors to make the boys' life so carefree. Young boys⁸⁵⁷ cannot take part in the hunt nor can they cut trees for garden clearings.⁸⁶⁸ They are expected to help clear underbrush during the latter operation, but the performance of such duties occurs only during a limited period at the end of the rains. Otherwise, they prepare for their future roles as hunters and fishermen through play. They gather wild fruits for their own consumption and shoot little birds from blinds in the underbrush. Or a band of boys may spend a day wandering along the banks of a stream to shoot smaller species of fish with the bow and arrow. When⁸⁸³ the boy reaches about fourteen years of age, he has grown^[868] sufficiently in strength and skill to participate occasionally in a hunting or fishing trip, and within two or three years he joins the men in most of their activities. He is then old^[582] enough to marry and, if there is no girl in his own village^[584].

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- 883 whom he desires, he goes off to other villages in search of
 [584] a mate. He will find the new men's houses in which he will
 stay to be organized along the same lines as the one in
 which he had been incorporated. And just as his strongest
 ties during adolescent years were to his age mates and the
 occupants of the men's house, so also will he find his pri-
 [882] mary association to be with the men of the village, as a
 whole.

POLITICAL ORGANIZATION

- 592 Patrilineal descent and matrilocal residence without vil-
 621 lage endogamy give the Mundurucú an unusual social
 structure. This is also manifest in the realm of political or-
 ganization. The oldest man of each household is nominally
 considered to be its leader, but I never saw the "leader"
 intervene in the over-all direction of women's activities,
 except to inform them when a consignment of farinha was
 promised to a trader. The actual direction of household
 activities is generally in the hands of its oldest woman,
 commonly the wife of the leader. The female director of
 the household exerts considerable influence over the other
 women because of her age and her senior status under
 ideally matrilocal conditions as older sister, mother, and
 grandmother to them. Her husband is respected by the
 members of the household, and by the rest of the people
 of the village, but he is peripheral to its main activities.
- 554 House leaders, as all older men, usually occupy high
 621 positions on the village prestige scale. Shamans are ac-
 [756] corded considerable standing, and any man who is serious
 in demeanor and possesses a large store of traditional
 knowledge is well regarded. The highest position in the
 622 village, however, is that of the chief. Considerable con-
 554 fusion surrounds the contemporary status of chieftainship
 because of historical changes in methods of selection and